

## **APPENDIX B - FORMATS FOR CONSULTATIONS**

[The following documents have been provided to FWS/NMFS Regional offices on disk as well.]

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**Form for an early alert**

**EARLY ALERT**

Prepared for: Director  
Date submitted:

State(s):

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**ISSUE:** Draft/Final [jeopardy/adverse modification] [opinion/conference] for the [name of the project]

**CONSULTING AGENCY/APPLICANT:**

**DATE CONSULTATION INITIATED:**

**DATE COMPLETION OF CONSULTATION IS DUE:**

**DATE OF ANY EXTENSIONS:** (explain reason for extension)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** (provide a brief summary)

**EFFECT ON SPECIES/CRITICAL HABITAT:** (provide a brief summary of effect on [species/critical habitat])

**I. REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES:** (list)

**A. HAVE YOU COORDINATED WITH THE AGENCY/APPLICANT TO DEVELOP THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES?** (yes)  
(no) **EXPLAIN.**

**B. HAVE YOU COORDINATED WITH ALL AFFECTED TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS TO DEVELOP THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES PER SECRETARIAL ORDER #3206?**

(yes)

(no)

**EXPLAIN**

**C. IF NOT, HAVE THE PROPOSED REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE ACTION AGENCY/APPLICANT? WHAT WAS THEIR REACTION?**

- D. IS THE AGENCY/APPLICANT WILLING TO INCORPORATE THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES AND AMEND THEIR PROJECT DESCRIPTION TO AVOID A JEOPARDY/ADVERSE MODIFICATION OPINION? (yes) (no) EXPLAIN WHY/WHY NOT.**
- E. IF THERE ARE NO REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES, WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE FOR COORDINATING WITH THE AGENCY/APPLICANT TO DEVELOP THEM? EXPLAIN.**

**II. REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES: (list)**

- A. HAVE YOU COORDINATED WITH THE AGENCY/APPLICANT TO DEVELOP THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES? (yes) (no) EXPLAIN.**
- B. IF NOT, HAVE THE PROPOSED REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE ACTION AGENCY/APPLICANT? WHAT WAS THEIR REACTION?**
- C. IS THE AGENCY/APPLICANT WILLING TO IMPLEMENT THE REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACTS OF INCIDENTAL TAKE? (yes) (no) EXPLAIN WHY/WHY NOT.**
- D. IF THERE ARE NO REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES, WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE FOR COORDINATING WITH THE AGENCY/APPLICANT TO DEVELOP THEM? EXPLAIN.**

**III. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS AFFECTED:**

(list the Senators/Representatives and their Congressional district)

**IV. EXPECTED REACTION OF AGENCY/APPLICANT/OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES (tribes, States, NGOs):**

**REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT:** (name, office, phone number)

## **Outline of a formal consultation package, including standardized statements**

Address

Salutation

Introductory Paragraph:

**This document transmits the (Fish and Wildlife Service's/National Marine Fisheries Service's) (Service) biological opinion based on our review of the proposed (name or designation for the action) located in (County, State, and Marine Area as appropriate), and its effects on (species) in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Your (date) request for formal consultation was received on (date).**

**This biological opinion is based on information provided in the (date) biological assessment (or other title), the (date) draft environmental assessment (or environmental impact statement), the (date) project proposal, telephone conversations of (dates) with (names), field investigations, and other sources of information. A complete administrative record of this consultation is on file at (this office/elsewhere).**

Consultation History

### **BIOLOGICAL OPINION**

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

Conservation Measures

STATUS OF THE SPECIES (rangewide and/or recovery unit)

ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE (in the action area)

EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Introduction:

**Cumulative effects include the effects of future State, tribal, local or private actions that are reasonably certain to occur in the action area considered in this biological opinion. Future Federal actions that are unrelated to the proposed action are not considered in this section because they require separate consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act.**

## CONCLUSION

**After reviewing the current status of (species), the environmental baseline for the action area [use if different from the range of the species], the effects of the proposed (action) and the cumulative effects, it is the Service's biological opinion that the (action), as proposed, (is/is not) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the (species), and (is/is not) likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. [If no critical habitat has been designated for the species or the action will not affect designated critical habitat, use one of the following statements.] No critical habitat has been designated for this species, therefore, none will be affected. -OR- Critical habitat for this species has been designated at (location), however, this action does not affect that area and no destruction or adverse modification of that critical habitat is anticipated.**

## REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES (as appropriate)

### Introductory Paragraph:

**Regulations (50 CFR §402.02) implementing section 7 of the Act define reasonable and prudent alternatives as alternative actions, identified during formal consultation, that: (1) can be implemented in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of the action; (2) can be implemented consistent with the scope of the action agency's legal authority and jurisdiction; (3) are economically and technologically feasible; and (4) would, the Service believes, avoid the likelihood of jeopardizing the continued existence of listed species or resulting in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

### Closing paragraph:

**Because this biological opinion has found (jeopardy/destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat), the (agency) is required to notify the Service of its final decision on the implementation of the reasonable and prudent alternatives.**

## INCIDENTAL TAKE STATEMENT

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 9 of the Act and Federal regulation pursuant to section 4(d) of the Act prohibit the take of endangered and threatened species, respectively, without special exemption. Take is defined as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Harm is further defined by FWS to include significant habitat modification or degradation that results in death or injury to listed species by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Harass is defined by FWS as intentional or negligent actions that create the likelihood of injury to listed species to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering. Incidental take is defined as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. Under the terms of section 7(b)(4) and section 7(o)(2), taking that is incidental to and not intended as part of the agency action is not considered to be prohibited taking under the Act provided that such taking is in compliance with the terms and conditions of this Incidental Take Statement.**

**The measures described below are non-discretionary, and must be undertaken by the (agency) so that they become binding conditions of any grant or permit issued to the (applicant), as appropriate, for the exemption in section 7(o)(2) to apply. The (agency) has a continuing duty to regulate the activity covered by this incidental take statement. If the (agency) (1) fails to assume and implement the terms and conditions or (2) fails to require the (applicant) to adhere to the terms and conditions of the incidental take statement through enforceable terms that are added to the permit or grant document, the protective coverage of section 7(o)(2) may lapse. In order to monitor the impact of incidental take, the (agency or applicant) must report the progress of the action and its impact on the species to the Service as specified in the incidental take statement. [50 CFR §402.14(i)(3)]**

The incidental take statement for any section 10(a)(1)(B) permit application includes the following standardized language which would replace the second paragraph above:

**The proposed [name] HCP and its associated documents clearly identify anticipated impacts to affected species likely to result from the proposed taking and the measures that are necessary and appropriate to minimize those impacts. All conservation measures described in the proposed HCP, together with the terms and conditions described in any associated Implementing Agreement and any section**

**10(a)(1)(B) permit or permits issued with respect to the proposed HCP, are hereby incorporated by reference as reasonable and prudent measures and terms and conditions within this Incidental Take Statement pursuant to 50 CFR §402.14(i). Such terms and conditions are non-discretionary and must be undertaken for the exemptions under section 10(a)(1)(B) and section 7(o)(2) of the Act to apply. If the permittee fails to adhere to these terms and conditions, the protective coverage of the section 10(a)(1)(B) permit and section 7(o)(2) may lapse. The amount or extent of incidental take anticipated under the proposed [name] HCP, associated reporting requirements, and provisions for disposition of dead or injured animals are as described in the HCP and its accompanying section 10(a)(1)(B) permit(s)].**

When the biological opinion finds **jeopardy** or **adverse modification** without a reasonable and prudent alternative, the introductory statement is as follows:

**This biological opinion finds the proposed action will result in (likely jeopardy to the species/destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat), and no reasonable and prudent alternative can be identified. Any incidental taking is prohibited by section 9 of the Act.**

If listed plant species are present in the action area, the following special incidental take provisions apply:

**Sections 7(b)(4) and 7(o)(2) of the Act generally do not apply to listed plant species. However, limited protection of listed plants from take is provided to the extent that the Act prohibits the removal and reduction to possession of Federally listed endangered plants or the malicious damage of such plants on areas under Federal jurisdiction, or the destruction of endangered plants on non-Federal areas in violation of State law or regulation or in the course of any violation of a State criminal trespass law. [Include citations to any applicable State laws.]**

#### AMOUNT OR EXTENT OF TAKE

Incidental take statement when no take is anticipated (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service does not anticipate the proposed action will incidentally take any (species).**

Incidental take statement for a biological opinion of likely **jeopardy** when incidental take is anticipated:

- o For opinions with only one reasonable and prudent alternative:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that the reasonable and prudent alternative will be implemented.**

- o For opinions with more than one reasonable and prudent alternative, provide separate estimates of anticipated take for each reasonable and prudent alternative, as appropriate:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that reasonable and prudent alternative number XX will be implemented.**

Introductory statement for amount and extent of take (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service anticipates (number of individuals or extent of habitat resulting from take of (species)) could be taken as a result of this proposed action. The incidental take is expected to be in the form of (harm, harass, kill, etc.).** [Separately specify each type of take anticipated.]

[Provide a concise summary of the analysis leading to this determination.]

OR

**The Service anticipates incidental take of (species) will be difficult to detect for the following reason(s):** [Incidental take of actual species numbers may be difficult to detect when the species is wide-ranging; has small body size; finding a dead or impaired specimen is unlikely; losses may be masked by seasonal fluctuations in numbers or other causes (e.g., oxygen depletions for aquatic species); or the species occurs in habitat (e.g., caves) that makes detection difficult]. **However, the following level of take of this species can be anticipated by loss of** [quantify amount of surrogate species, food, cover, other essential habitat element such as water quantity or quality, or symbiont] **because:** [provide an explanation].

When take of listed migratory birds (including the bald eagle) will result from the actions under consultation:

**The Fish and Wildlife Service will not refer the incidental take of any migratory bird or bald eagle for prosecution under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 703-712), or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 668-668d), if such take is in compliance with the terms and conditions (including amount and/or number) specified herein.**

Standard paragraph for incidental take of marine mammals: [If the incidental take is not authorized under MMPA 101(a)(5):]

**The Service is not including an incidental take authorization for marine mammals at this time because the incidental take of marine mammals has not been authorized under section 101(a)(5) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and/or its 1994 Amendments. Following issuance of such regulations or authorizations, the Service may amend this biological opinion to include an incidental take statement for marine mammals, as appropriate.**

After area-specific or activity-specific regulations have taken effect:

**Pursuant to section 101(a)(5) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, as amended in 1994, and implementing regulations at 50 CFR §18.27, and 50 CFR §216 and §229, the following measures are required to be consistent with the total taking allowable under the MMPA authorization and to effect the least practical adverse impact on the species and its habitat and on the availability of the species for subsistence uses:** [Cite measures identified in specific regulations and/or letters of authorization or permits for commercial fishing]. **Pursuant to section 7(b)(4) of the Endangered Species Act, the following reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate to minimize take:** [Go on to list the measures, followed by the standard paragraph for terms and conditions.]

#### EFFECT OF THE TAKE

The following statement should be made when the biological opinion finds likely **jeopardy/adverse modification**, and no reasonable and prudent alternative is available:

**Because the proposed action is (1) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of (species) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat, and (2) no reasonable and prudent alternatives have been identified, any incidental take resulting from the proposed action would be prohibited.**

If the proposed action is not likely to result in **jeopardy/adverse modification**:

**In the accompanying biological opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the species or destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

If the opinion contains reasonable and prudent alternatives:

**In the accompanying biological opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the species or destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat when (one of) the reasonable and prudent alternative(s) is implemented.**

#### REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES (as appropriate)

Standardized introductory paragraph for reasonable and prudent measures for species other than marine mammals and migratory birds:

**The Service believes the following reasonable and prudent measure(s) are necessary and appropriate to minimize take of (species):** [Go on to list these measures and provide a brief discussion documenting the Service's analysis of the biological need for, and reasonableness of, these measures.]

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Standardized introductory paragraph for terms and conditions:

**In order to be exempt from the prohibitions of section 9 of the Act, the (agency) must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures described above and outline required reporting/monitoring requirements. These terms and conditions are non-discretionary.** [Go on to list these terms and conditions, including the requirements for monitoring, reporting, review, [see 50 CFR 402.14(i)(3)] and disposition of any specimens [see 50 CFR 402.14(i)(1)(v)).]

Salvage of specimens and/or habitat data included as a term and condition (as appropriate)

Closing Paragraph:

**The Service believes that no more than (number or extent) of (species) will be incidentally taken as a result of the proposed action. The reasonable and prudent measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, are designed to minimize the impact of incidental take that might otherwise result from the proposed action. If, during the course of the action, this level of incidental take is exceeded, such incidental take represents new information requiring reinitiation of consultation and review of the reasonable and prudent measures provided. The Federal agency must immediately provide an**

**explanation of the causes of the taking and review with the Service the need for possible modification of the reasonable and prudent measures.**

CONFERENCE REPORT/CONFERENCE NOTICE (as appropriate)

#### CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 7(a)(1) of the Act directs Federal agencies to utilize their authorities to further the purposes of the Act by carrying out conservation programs for the benefit of endangered and threatened species. Conservation recommendations are discretionary agency activities to minimize or avoid adverse effects of a proposed action on listed species or critical habitat, to help implement recovery plans, or to develop information.**

Closing paragraph:

**In order for the Service to be kept informed of actions minimizing or avoiding adverse effects or benefitting listed species or their habitats, the Service requests notification of the implementation of any conservation recommendations.**

#### REINITIATION NOTICE

The standard closing statement of the formal consultation package is as follows:

**This concludes formal consultation on the action(s) outlined in the (request/reinitiation request). As provided in 50 CFR §402.16, reinitiation of formal consultation is required where discretionary Federal agency involvement or control over the action has been retained (or is authorized by law) and if: (1) the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded; (2) new information reveals effects of the agency action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in this opinion; (3) the agency action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the listed species or critical habitat not considered in this opinion; or (4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the action. In instances where the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded, any operations causing such take must cease pending reinitiation.**

#### LITERATURE CITED

**Example of a letter sent to inform action agencies the Services have received a complete initiation package and will begin formal consultation on a proposed action.**

(date)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ :

This letter acknowledges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's [or National Marine Fisheries Service's] (Service) [date of receipt of letter initiating consultation] receipt of your [date of agency's initiating letter] letter requesting initiation of formal section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act. The consultation concerns the possible effects of your proposed [name and location of the action] on [name of listed species and/or critical habitats affected].

All information required of you to initiate consultation was either included with your letter or is otherwise accessible for our consideration and reference. We have assigned log number [log number] to this consultation. Please refer to that number in future correspondence on this consultation.

Section 7 allows the Service up to 90 calendar days to conclude formal consultation with your agency and an additional 45 calendar days to prepare our biological opinion (unless we mutually agree to an extension). Therefore, we expect to provide you with our biological opinion no later than [date = 135 calendar days after receipt of initiation request].

As a reminder, the Endangered Species Act requires that after initiation of formal consultation, the Federal action agency may not make any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources that limits future options. This practice insures agency actions do not preclude the formulation or implementation of reasonable and prudent alternatives that avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of endangered or threatened species or destroying or modifying their critical habitats.

If you have any questions or concerns about this consultation or the consultation process in general, please feel free to contact me or [name of staff member] at [number].

Sincerely yours,

Field Supervisor

**Example of a letter sent when an incomplete formal consultation request has been received.**

(date)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ :

This letter acknowledges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's [or National Marine Fisheries Service's] (Service) [date of receipt of letter initiating consultation] receipt of your [date of agency's initiating letter] letter requesting initiation of formal section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act. The consultation concerns the possible effects of your proposed [name and location of the action] on [name of listed species and/or critical habitats affected].

The Service has not received all of the information necessary to initiate formal consultation on [name of the project] as outlined in the regulations governing interagency consultations (50 CFR §402.14). To complete the initiation package, we will require the following information:

1. [Outline the additional information needs. Follow the general sequence and use language in 50 CFR §402.14(c) to identify each piece of missing information.]
2. etc.

The formal consultation process for the project will not begin until we receive all of the information, or a statement explaining why that information cannot be made available. We will notify you when we receive this additional information; our notification letter will also outline the dates within which formal consultation should be complete and the biological opinion delivered on the proposed action.

If you have any questions or concerns about this consultation or the consultation process in general, please feel free to call me at [number].

Sincerely yours,

Field Supervisor

## **Outline of a formal, stand-alone conference package, including standardized statements**

Address

Salutation

Introductory Paragraph:

**This document transmits the (Fish and Wildlife Service's/National Marine Fisheries Service's) conference opinion based on the Service's review of the proposed (name or designation for the action) located in (County, State and Marine Area as appropriate), and its effects on (species) in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Your (date) request for formal conference was received on (date).**

**This conference opinion is based on information provided in the (date) biological assessment (or other title), the (date) draft environmental assessment (or environmental impact statement), the (date) project proposal, telephone conversations of (dates) with (names), field investigations, and other sources of information. A complete administrative record of this consultation is on file in (this office/elsewhere).**

Conference History

### **CONFERENCE OPINION**

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

Conservation Measures

STATUS OF THE SPECIES (rangewide)

ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE (in the action area)

EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Introduction:

**Cumulative effects include the effects of future State, tribal, local or private actions that are reasonably certain to occur in the action area considered in this biological opinion. Future Federal actions that are unrelated to the proposed action are not considered in this section because they require separate consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act.**

## **CONCLUSION**

### **If no jeopardy/adverse modification:**

**After reviewing the current status of (species), the environmental baseline for the action area [use if different from the range of the species], the effects of the proposed (action) and the cumulative effects, it is the Service's conference opinion that the (action), as proposed, (is/is not) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the proposed (species), and (is/is not) likely to destroy or adversely modify proposed critical habitat.**

### **In jeopardy or adverse modification opinions:**

**Based on the foregoing analysis, the Service concurs with the agency that the (proposed action) is likely to (jeopardize the continued existence of the proposed species and/or destroy or adversely modify the proposed critical habitat). While the Act does not preclude an agency from taking an action with such adverse effects on a proposed (species/critical habitat), the (agency) is reminded that if the (species is listed/critical habitat is designated) prior to the completion of the action or while (agency) still maintains any discretionary authority relative to the action, the (agency) may be required to modify or suspend the action at that time pending resolution of formal consultation under section 7. Consequently, the Service advises (the agency) to consider implementing the following reasonable and prudent alternative(s).**

When the conference opinion finds **jeopardy** or **adverse modification** without a reasonable and prudent alternative, the introductory statement is as follows:

**The conference opinion finds the proposed action will result in (likely jeopardy to the species/destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat), and no reasonable and prudent alternative can be identified. While the Act does not preclude an agency from taking an action with such adverse effects on a proposed (species/critical habitat), the (agency) is reminded that if the (species is listed/critical habitat is designated) prior to the completion of the action or while (agency) still maintains any discretionary authority relative to the action, the**

**(agency) may be required to modify or suspend the action at that time pending resolution of formal consultation under section 7.**

#### REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES (as appropriate)

##### Introductory Paragraph:

**Regulations (50 CFR §402.02) implementing section 7 of the Act define reasonable and prudent alternatives as alternative actions, identified during formal consultation, that: (1) can be implemented in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of the action; (2) can be implemented consistent with the scope of the action agency's legal authority and jurisdiction; (3) are economically and technologically feasible; and (4) would, the Service believes, avoid the likelihood of jeopardizing the continued existence of listed species or resulting in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

#### INCIDENTAL TAKE STATEMENT

##### Introductory paragraph:

**Section 9 of the Act and Federal regulation pursuant to section 4(d) of the Act prohibit the take of endangered and threatened species, respectively, without special exemption. Take is defined as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Harm is further defined by FWS to include significant habitat modification or degradation that results in death or injury to listed species by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Harass is defined by FWS as intentional or negligent actions that create the likelihood of injury to listed species to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering. Incidental take is defined as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. Under the terms of section 7(b)(4) and section 7(o)(2), taking that is incidental to and not intended as part of the agency action is not considered to be prohibited taking under the Act provided that such taking is in compliance with the terms and conditions of this Incidental Take Statement.**

**The prohibitions against taking the species found in section 9 of the Act do not apply until the species is listed. However, the Service advises the (agency) to consider implementing the following reasonable and prudent measures. If this conference opinion is adopted as a biological opinion following a listing or designation, these measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, will be**

**nondiscretionary, and must be undertaken by the (agency) so that they become binding conditions of any grant or permit issued to the (applicant), as appropriate, for the exemption in section 7(o)(2) to apply. The (agency) has a continuing duty to regulate the activity covered by this incidental take statement. If the (agency) (1) fails to assume and implement the terms and conditions or (2) fails to require the (applicant) to adhere to the terms and conditions of the incidental take statement through enforceable terms that are added to the permit or grant document, the protective coverage of section 7(o)(2) may lapse. In order to monitor the impact of incidental take, the (agency or applicant) must report the progress of the action and its impact on the species to the Service as specified in the incidental take statement. [50 CFR §402.14(i)(3)]**

If listed plant species are present in the action area, the following special incidental take provisions apply:

**Sections 7(b)(4) and 7(o)(2) of the Act generally do not apply to listed plant species. However, limited protection of listed plants from take is provided to the extent that the Act prohibits the removal and reduction to possession of Federally listed endangered plants or the malicious damage of such plants on areas under Federal jurisdiction, or the destruction of endangered plants on non-Federal areas in violation of State law or regulation or in the course of any violation of a State criminal trespass law. [Include citations to any applicable State laws.]**

#### AMOUNT OR EXTENT OF TAKE

Incidental take statement when no take is anticipated (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service does not anticipate the proposed action will incidentally take any (species).**

Incidental take statement for a conference opinion of likely **jeopardy** when incidental take is anticipated:

o For opinions with only one reasonable and prudent alternative:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that the reasonable and prudent alternative will be implemented.**

o For opinions with more than one reasonable and prudent alternative, provide separate estimates of anticipated take for each reasonable and prudent alternative, as appropriate:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that reasonable and prudent alternative number XX will be implemented.**

Introductory statement for amount and extent of take (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service anticipates (number of individuals or extent of habitat resulting from take of (species)) could be taken as a result of this proposed action. The incidental take is expected to be in the form of (harm, harass, kill, etc.).** [Separately specify each type of take anticipated.]

[Provide a concise summary of the analysis leading to this determination.]

OR

**The Service anticipates incidental take of (species) will be difficult to detect for the following reason(s):** [Incidental take of actual species numbers may be difficult to detect when the species is wide-ranging; has small body size; finding a dead or impaired specimen is unlikely; losses may be masked by seasonal fluctuations in numbers or other causes (e.g., oxygen depletions for aquatic species); or the species occurs in habitat (e.g., caves) that makes detection difficult]. **However, the following level of take of this species can be anticipated by loss of** [quantify amount of surrogate species, food, cover, other essential habitat element such as water quantity or quality, or symbiont] **because:** [provide an explanation].

## EFFECT OF THE TAKE

The following statement should be made when the conference opinion finds likely **jeopardy/adverse modification**, and no reasonable and prudent alternative is available:

**Because the proposed action is 1) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of (species) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat, and 2) no reasonable and prudent alternatives have been identified, any incidental take resulting from the proposed action will be prohibited once the species is listed or the critical habitat is designated.**

If the proposed action is not likely to result in **jeopardy/adverse modification**:

**In the accompanying biological opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the proposed species or destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat.**

If the opinion contains reasonable and prudent alternatives:

**In the accompanying biological opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the proposed species or destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical habitat when (one of) the reasonable and prudent alternative(s) is implemented.**

#### REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES (as appropriate)

Standardized introductory paragraph for reasonable and prudent measures for species other than marine mammals and migratory birds:

**The Service believes the following reasonable and prudent measure(s) are necessary and appropriate to minimize take of (species):** [Go on to list these measures and provide a brief discussion documenting the Service's analysis of the biological need for, and reasonableness of, these measures.]

**The prohibitions against taking the species found in section 9 of the Act do not apply until the species is listed. However, the Service advises the (agency) to consider implementing the following reasonable and prudent measures. If this conference opinion is adopted as a biological opinion following a listing or designation, these measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, will be nondiscretionary.**

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Standardized introductory paragraph for terms and conditions:

**In order to be exempt from the prohibitions of section 9 of the Act once the proposed species is listed, the (agency) must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures described above and outline required reporting/monitoring requirements. If this conference opinion is adopted as a biological opinion following a listing or designation, these terms and conditions will be non-discretionary.**

[Go on to list these terms and conditions, including the requirements for monitoring, reporting, review, and disposition of any specimens.]

Salvage of specimens and/or habitat data included as a term and condition (as appropriate)

Closing paragraph:

**The Service believes that no more than (number or extent) of (species) will be incidentally taken as a result of the proposed action. The reasonable and prudent measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, are designed to minimize the impact of incidental take that might otherwise result from the proposed action. If, during the course of the action, this level of incidental take is exceeded, such incidental take represents new information requiring reinitiation of consultation and review of the reasonable and prudent measures provided. The Federal agency must immediately provide an explanation of the causes of the taking and review with the Service the need for possible modification of the reasonable and prudent measures.**

#### CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 7(a)(1) of the Act directs Federal agencies to utilize their authorities to further the purposes of the Act by carrying out conservation programs for the benefit of endangered and threatened species. Conservation recommendations are discretionary agency activities to minimize or avoid adverse effects of a proposed action on listed species or critical habitat, to help implement recovery plans, or to develop information.**

Closing paragraph:

**In order for the Service to be kept informed of actions minimizing or avoiding adverse effects or benefitting listed species or their habitats, the Service requests notification of the implementation of any conservation recommendations.**

#### REINITIATION NOTICE

The standard closing statement for formal conferences is as follows:

**This concludes the conference for (action). You may ask the Service to confirm the conference opinion as a biological opinion issued through formal consultation if the (species is listed or critical habitat is designated). The request must be in writing. If the Service reviews the proposed action and finds that there have been no significant changes in the action as planned or in the information used during the conference, the Service will confirm the conference opinion as the biological opinion on the project and no further section 7 consultation will be necessary.**

**After (listing of the (species) as endangered/threatened and/or designation of critical habitat for (species)) and any subsequent adoption of this conference**

**opinion, the Federal agency shall request reinitiation of consultation if: (1) the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded; (2) new information reveals effects of the agency action that may affect the species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in this conference opinion; (3) the agency action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the species or critical habitat that was not considered in this conference opinion; or (4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the action.**

**The incidental take statement provided in this conference opinion does not become effective until the species is listed and the conference opinion is adopted as the biological opinion issued through formal consultation. At that time, the project will be reviewed to determine whether any take of the (species/habitat) has occurred. Modifications of the opinion and incidental take statement may be appropriate to reflect that take. No take of the (species/habitat) may occur between the listing of (species) and the adoption of the conference opinion through formal consultation, or the completion of a subsequent formal consultation.**

#### LITERATURE CITED

**Outline of a formal conference incorporated into a formal consultation package, including standardized statements**

Address

Salutation

Introductory Paragraph:

**This document transmits the (Fish and Wildlife Service's/National Marine Fisheries Service's) biological and conference opinions based on the Service's review of the proposed (name or designation for the action) located in (County, State, and Marine Area as appropriate), and its effects on (species) in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Your (date) request for formal consultation was received on (date).**

**These biological and conference opinions are based on information provided in the (date) biological assessment (or other title), the (date) draft environmental assessment (or environmental impact statement), the (date) project proposal, telephone conversations of (dates) with (names), field investigations, and other sources of information. A complete administrative record of this consultation is on file in (this office/elsewhere).**

Consultation History

**BIOLOGICAL AND CONFERENCE OPINIONS**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

Conservation Measures

STATUS OF THE SPECIES (rangewide and/or recovery unit)

Listed species/critical habitat:

Proposed species/critical habitat:

ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE (in the action area)

Listed species/critical habitat:

Proposed species/critical habitat:

## EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

Listed species/critical habitat:

Proposed species/critical habitat:

## CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Introduction:

**Cumulative effects include the effects of future State, tribal, local or private actions that are reasonably certain to occur in the action area considered in this biological opinion. Future Federal actions that are unrelated to the proposed action are not considered in this section because they require separate consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act.**

## CONCLUSION

Listed species/critical habitat:

**After reviewing the current status of (species), the environmental baseline for the action area [use if different from the range of the species], the effects of the proposed (action) and the cumulative effects, it is the Service's biological opinion that the (action), as proposed, (is/is not) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the (species), and (is/is not) likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. [If no critical habitat has been designated for the species or the action will not affect designated critical habitat, use one of the following statements.] No critical habitat has been designated for this species, therefore, none will be affected. -OR- Critical habitat for this species has been designated at (location), however, this action does not affect that area and no destruction or adverse modification of that critical habitat is anticipated.**

Proposed species/critical habitat:

**If no jeopardy/adverse modification:**

**After reviewing the current status of (species), the environmental baseline for the action area [use if different from the range of the species], the effects of the proposed (action) and the cumulative effects, it is the Service's conference opinion that the**

**(action), as proposed, (is/is not) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the proposed (species), and (is/is not) likely to destroy or adversely modify proposed critical habitat.**

**In jeopardy or adverse modification opinions:**

**Based on the foregoing analysis, the Service concurs with the agency that the (proposed action) is likely to (jeopardize the continued existence of the proposed species and/or destroy or adversely modify the proposed critical habitat). While the Act does not preclude an agency from taking an action with such adverse effects on a proposed (species/critical habitat), the (agency) is reminded that if the (species is listed/critical habitat is designated) prior to the completion of the action or while (agency) still maintains any discretionary authority relative to the action, the (agency) may be required to modify or suspend the action at that time pending resolution of the formal consultation under section 7. Consequently, the Service advises (the agency) to consider implementing the following reasonable and prudent alternative(s).**

**REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES (as appropriate)**

**Introductory Paragraph:**

**Regulations (50 CFR §402.02) implementing section 7 of the Act define reasonable and prudent alternatives as alternative actions, identified during formal consultation, that: (1) can be implemented in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of the action; (2) can be implemented consistent with the scope of the action agency's legal authority and jurisdiction; (3) are economically and technologically feasible; and (4) would, the Service believes, avoid the likelihood of jeopardizing the continued existence of listed species or resulting in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

**[Break out discussions for listed and proposed species/critical habitats separately.]**

**Closing Paragraph:**

**Because this (biological and/or conference) opinion has found (jeopardy/destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat), the (agency) is required to notify the Service of its final decision on the implementation of reasonable and prudent alternatives.**

**INCIDENTAL TAKE STATEMENT**

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 9 of the Act and Federal regulation pursuant to section 4(d) of the Act prohibit the take of endangered and threatened species, respectively, without special exemption. Take is defined as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Harm is further defined by FWS to include significant habitat modification or degradation that results in death or injury to listed species by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Harass is defined by FWS as intentional or negligent actions that create the likelihood of injury to listed species to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering. Incidental take is defined as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. Under the terms of section 7(b)(4) and section 7(o)(2), taking that is incidental to and not intended as part of the agency action is not considered to be prohibited taking under the Act provided that such taking is in compliance with the terms and conditions of this Incidental Take Statement.**

**The measures described below are non-discretionary, and must be undertaken by the (agency) so that they become binding conditions of any grant or permit issued to the (applicant), as appropriate, for the exemption in section 7(o)(2) to apply. The (agency) has a continuing duty to regulate the activity covered by this incidental take statement. If the (agency) (1) fails to assume and implement the terms and conditions or (2) fails to require the (applicant) to adhere to the terms and conditions of the incidental take statement through enforceable terms that are added to the permit or grant document, the protective coverage of section 7(o)(2) may lapse. In order to monitor the impact of incidental take, the (agency or applicant) must report the progress of the action and its impact on the species to the Service as specified in the incidental take statement. [50 CFR §402.14(i)(3)]**

The incidental take statement for any section 10(a)(1)(b) permit application includes the following standardized language which would replace the second paragraph above:

**The proposed [name] HCP and its associated documents clearly identify anticipated impacts to affected species likely to result from the proposed taking and the measures that are necessary and appropriate to minimize those impacts. All conservation measures described in the proposed HCP, together with the terms and conditions described in any associated Implementing Agreement and any section 10(a)(1)(B) permit or permits issued with respect to the proposed HCP, are hereby incorporated by reference as reasonable and prudent measures and terms and conditions within this Incidental Take Statement pursuant to 50 CFR**

**§402.14(i). Such terms and conditions are non-discretionary and must be undertaken for the exemptions under section 10(a)(1)(B) and section 7(o)(2) of the Act to apply. If the permittee fails to adhere to these terms and conditions, the protective coverage of the section 10(a)(1)(B) permit and section 7(o)(2) may lapse. The amount or extent of incidental take anticipated under the proposed [name] HCP, associated reporting requirements, and provisions for disposition of dead or injured animals are as described in the HCP and its accompanying section 10(a)(1)(B) permit(s).**

When the biological and/or conference opinion finds **jeopardy** or **adverse modification** without a reasonable and prudent alternative, the introductory statement is as follows:

**The (biological and/or conference) opinion finds the proposed action will result in (likely jeopardy to the species/destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat), and no reasonable and prudent alternative can be identified. Any incidental taking is prohibited by section 9 of the Act. (For conference opinion change last sentence to) Once the species is listed or the critical habitat is designated, any incidental taking is prohibited by section 9 of the Act.**

If listed plant species are present in the action area, the following special incidental take provisions apply:

**Sections 7(b)(4) and 7(o)(2) of the Act do not apply to listed plant species. However, limited protection of listed plants from take is provided to the extent that the Act prohibits the removal of Federally listed endangered plants or the malicious damage of such plants on areas under Federal jurisdiction, or the destruction of listed plants on non-Federal areas in violation of State law or regulation.** [Include citations to any applicable State laws.]

#### AMOUNT OR EXTENT OF TAKE

[Break out discussions for listed and proposed species separately.]

Incidental take statement when no take is anticipated (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service does not anticipate the proposed action will incidentally take any (species).**

Incidental take statement for a biological/conference opinion of likely **jeopardy** when incidental take is anticipated:

- o For opinions with only one reasonable and prudent alternative:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that the reasonable and prudent alternative will be implemented.**

- o For opinions with more than one reasonable and prudent alternative, provide separate estimates of anticipated take for each reasonable and prudent alternative, as appropriate:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that reasonable and prudent alternative number XX will be implemented.**

Introductory statement for amount and extent of take (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service anticipates (number of individuals or extent of habitat resulting from take of (species)) could be taken as a result of this proposed action. The incidental take is expected to be in the form of (harm, harass, kill, etc.).** [Separately specify each type of take anticipated.]

[Provide a concise summary of the analysis leading to this determination.]

OR

**The Service anticipates incidental take of (species) will be difficult to detect for the following reason(s):** [Incidental take of actual species numbers may be difficult to detect when the species is wide-ranging; has small body size; finding a dead or impaired specimen is unlikely; losses may be masked by seasonal fluctuations in numbers or other causes (e.g., oxygen depletions for aquatic species); or the species occurs in habitat (e.g., caves) that makes detection difficult]. **However, the following level of take of this species can be anticipated by loss of** [quantify amount of surrogate species, food, cover, other essential habitat element such as water quantity or quality, or symbiont] **because:** [provide an explanation].

When take of listed migratory birds (including the bald eagle) will result from the actions under consultation:

**The Fish and Wildlife Service will not refer the incidental take of any migratory bird or bald eagle for prosecution under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 703-712), or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 668-668d), if such take is in compliance with the terms and conditions (including amount and/or number) specified herein.**

Standard paragraph for incidental take of marine mammals: [If the incidental take is not authorized under MMPA 101(a)(5):]

**The Service is not including an incidental take authorization for marine mammals at this time because the incidental take of marine mammals has not been authorized under section 101(a)(5) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and/or its 1994 Amendments. Following issuance of such regulations or authorizations, the Service may amend this biological opinion to include an incidental take statement for marine mammals, as appropriate.**

After area-specific or activity-specific regulations have taken effect:

**Pursuant to section 101(a)(5) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, as amended in 1994, and implementing regulations at 50 CFR §18.27, and 50 CFR §216 and §229, the following measures are required to be consistent with the total taking allowable under the MMPA authorization and to effect the least practical adverse impact on the species and its habitat and on the availability of the species for subsistence uses: [Cite measures identified in specific regulations and/or letters of authorization or permits for commercial fishing]. Pursuant to section 7(b)(4) of the Endangered Species Act, the following reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate to minimize take: [Go on to list the measures, followed by the standard paragraph for terms and conditions.]**

## EFFECT OF THE TAKE

[Break out discussion for listed and proposed species separately.]

The following statement should be made when the opinion finds likely **jeopardy/adverse modification**, and no reasonable and prudent alternative is available:

For biological opinions:

**Because the proposed action is (1) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of (species) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat, and (2) no reasonable and prudent alternatives have been identified, any incidental take resulting from the proposed action would be prohibited.**

For conference opinions:

**Because the proposed action is 1) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of (species) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of proposed critical**

**habitat, and 2) no reasonable and prudent alternatives have been identified, any incidental take resulting from the proposed action will be prohibited once the species is listed or the critical habitat is designated.**

If the action is not likely to result in **jeopardy/adverse modification**:

**In the accompanying biological/conference opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the species or destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

If the opinion contains reasonable and prudent alternatives:

**In the accompanying biological/conference opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the species or destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat when (one of) the reasonable and prudent alternative(s) is implemented.**

REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES (as appropriate)

[Break out discussion of listed and proposed species separately.]

Standardized introductory paragraph for reasonable and prudent measures for species other than marine mammals and migratory birds:

**The Service believes the following reasonable and prudent measure(s) are necessary and appropriate to minimize take of (species):** [Go on to list these measures and provide a brief discussion documenting the Service's analysis of the biological need for, and reasonableness of, these measures.]

Add for proposed species:

**The prohibitions against taking the species found in section 9 of the Act do not apply until the species is listed. However, the Service advises the (agency) to consider implementing the following reasonable and prudent measures. If this conference opinion is adopted as a biological opinion following a listing or designation, these measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, will be nondiscretionary.**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

[Break out discussions for listed and proposed species separately.]

Standardized introductory paragraph for terms and conditions:

**In order to be exempt from the prohibitions of section 9 of the Act, the (agency) must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures described above and outline required reporting/monitoring requirements. These terms and conditions are non-discretionary.**

[Go on to list these terms and conditions, including the requirements for monitoring, reporting, review, and disposition of any specimens.]

Salvage of specimens and/or habitat data included as a term and condition (as appropriate)

Closing paragraph:

**The Service believes that no more than (number or extent) of (species) will be incidentally taken as a result of the proposed action. The reasonable and prudent measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, are designed to minimize the impact of incidental take that might otherwise result from the proposed action. If, during the course of the action, this level of incidental take is exceeded, such incidental take represents new information requiring reinitiation of consultation and review of the reasonable and prudent measures provided. The Federal agency must immediately provide an explanation of the causes of the taking and review with the Service the need for possible modification of the reasonable and prudent measures.**

## CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 7(a)(1) of the Act directs Federal agencies to utilize their authorities to further the purposes of the Act by carrying out conservation programs for the benefit of endangered and threatened species. Conservation recommendations are discretionary agency activities to minimize or avoid adverse effects of a proposed action on listed species or critical habitat, to help implement recovery plans, or to develop information.**

Closing paragraph:

**In order for the Service to be kept informed of actions minimizing or avoiding adverse effects or benefitting listed species or their habitats, the Service requests notification of the implementation of any conservation recommendations.**

## REINITIATION NOTICE

The standard closing statement for formal consultation/conferences is as follows:

**This concludes formal consultation and conference on the action(s) outlined in the (request/reinitiation request). As provided in 50 CFR §402.16, reinitiation of formal consultation is required where discretionary Federal agency involvement or control over the action has been retained (or is authorized by law) and if: (1) the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded; (2) new information reveals effects of the agency action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in this opinion; (3) the agency action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the listed species or critical habitat not considered in this opinion; or (4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the action. In instances where the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded, any operations causing such take must cease pending reinitiation.**

**You may ask the Service to confirm the conference opinion as a biological opinion issued through formal consultation if the (species is listed or critical habitat is designated). The request must be in writing. If the Service reviews the proposed action and finds that there have been no significant changes in the action as planned or in the information used during the conference, the Service will confirm the conference opinion as the biological opinion on the project and no further section 7 consultation will be necessary.**

**After (listing of the (species) as endangered/threatened and/or designation of critical habitat for (species)) and any subsequent adoption of this conference opinion, the Federal agency shall request reinitiation of consultation if: (1) the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded; (2) new information reveals effects of the agency action that may affect the species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in this conference opinion; (3) the agency action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the species or critical habitat that was not considered in this conference opinion; or (4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the action.**

**The incidental take statement provided in this conference opinion does not become effective until the species is listed and the conference opinion is adopted as the biological opinion issued through formal consultation. At that time, the project will be reviewed to determine whether any take of the (species/habitat) has occurred. Modifications of the opinion and incidental take statement may be appropriate to reflect that take. No take of the (species/habitat) may occur**

**between the (listing of the (species) and the adoption of the conference opinion through formal consultation, or the completion of a subsequent formal consultation.**

#### LITERATURE CITED

## **Outline of an early consultation package, including standardized statements**

Address

Salutation

Introductory Paragraph:

**This document transmits the (Fish and Wildlife Service's/National Marine Fisheries Service's) preliminary biological opinion based on the Service's review of the proposed (name or designation for the action) located in (County, State, and Marine Area as appropriate), and its effects on (species) in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Your (date) request for formal consultation was received on (date).**

**This preliminary biological opinion is based on information provided in the (date) biological assessment (or other title), the (date) draft environmental assessment (or environmental impact statement), the (date) project proposal, telephone conversations of (dates) with (names), field investigations, and other sources of information. A complete administrative record of this consultation is on file in (this office/elsewhere).**

Consultation History

### **PRELIMINARY BIOLOGICAL OPINION**

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

Conservation Measures

STATUS OF THE SPECIES (rangewide and/or recovery unit)

ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE (in the action area)

EFFECTS OF THE ACTION

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Introduction:

**Cumulative effects include the effects of future State, tribal, local or private actions that are reasonably certain to occur in the action area considered in this preliminary biological opinion. Future Federal actions that are unrelated to the proposed action are not considered in this section because they require separate consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act.**

#### PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

**After reviewing the current status of (species), the environmental baseline for the action area [use if different from the range of the species], the effects of the proposed (action) and the cumulative effects, it is the Service's preliminary biological opinion that the (action), as proposed, (is/is not) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the (species), and (is/is not) likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. [If no critical habitat has been designated for the species or the action will not affect designated critical habitat, use one of the following statements.] No critical habitat has been designated for this species, therefore, none will be affected. -OR- Critical habitat for this species has been designated at (location), however, this action does not affect that area and no destruction or adverse modification of that critical habitat is anticipated.**

#### REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES (as appropriate)

##### Introductory Paragraph:

**Regulations (50 CFR §402.02) implementing section 7 of the Act define reasonable and prudent alternatives as alternative actions, identified during formal consultation, that: (1) can be implemented in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of the action; (2) can be implemented consistent with the scope of the action agency's legal authority and jurisdiction; (3) are economically and technologically feasible; and (4) would, the Service believes, avoid the likelihood of jeopardizing the continued existence of listed species or resulting in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

##### Closing paragraph:

**Because this preliminary biological opinion has found (jeopardy/destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat), the (agency) is required to notify the Service of its final decision on the implementation of the reasonable and prudent alternatives.**

#### INCIDENTAL TAKE STATEMENT

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 9 of the Act and Federal regulation pursuant to section 4(d) of the Act prohibit the take of endangered and threatened species, respectively, without special exemption. Take is defined as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Harm is further defined by FWS to include significant habitat modification or degradation that results in death or injury to listed species by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Harass is defined by FWS as intentional or negligent actions that create the likelihood of injury to listed species to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering. Incidental take is defined as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. Under the terms of section 7(b)(4) and section 7(o)(2), taking that is incidental to and not intended as part of the agency action is not considered to be prohibited taking under the Act provided that such taking is in compliance with the terms and conditions of this Incidental Take Statement.**

**The measures described below are non-discretionary, and must be undertaken by the (agency) so that they become binding conditions of any grant or permit issued to the (applicant), as appropriate, for the exemption in section 7(o)(2) to apply. The (agency) has a continuing duty to regulate the activity covered by this incidental take statement. If the (agency) (1) fails to assume and implement the terms and conditions or (2) fails to require the (applicant) to adhere to the terms and conditions of the incidental take statement through enforceable terms that are added to the permit or grant document, the protective coverage of section 7(o)(2) may lapse. In order to monitor the impact of incidental take, the (agency or applicant) must report the progress of the action and its impact on the species to the Service as specified in the incidental take statement. [50 CFR §402.14(i)(3)]**

When the preliminary biological opinion finds **jeopardy** or **adverse modification** without a reasonable and prudent alternative, the introductory statement is as follows:

**The biological opinion finds the proposed action will result in (likely jeopardy to the species/destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat), and no reasonable and prudent alternative can be identified. Any incidental taking is prohibited by section 9 of the Act.**

If listed plant species are present in the action area, the following special incidental take provisions apply:

**Sections 7(b)(4) and 7(o)(2) of the Act generally do not apply to listed plant species. However, limited protection of listed plants from take is provided to the extent that the Act prohibits the removal and reduction to possession of Federally listed endangered plants or the malicious damage of such plants on areas under Federal jurisdiction, or the destruction of endangered plants on non-Federal areas in violation of State law or regulation or in the course of any violation of a State criminal trespass law. [Include citations to any applicable State laws.]**

#### AMOUNT OR EXTENT OF TAKE

Incidental take statement when no take is anticipated (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service does not anticipate the proposed action will incidentally take any (species).**

Incidental take statement for a preliminary biological opinion of likely **jeopardy** when incidental take is anticipated:

- o For opinions with only one reasonable and prudent alternative:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that the reasonable and prudent alternative will be implemented.**

- o For opinions with more than one reasonable and prudent alternative, provide separate estimates of anticipated take for each reasonable and prudent alternative, as appropriate:

**The Service has developed the following incidental take statement based on the premise that reasonable and prudent alternative number XX will be implemented.**

Introductory statement for amount and extent of take (**jeopardy** or **non-jeopardy** opinion):

**The Service anticipates (number of individuals or extent of habitat resulting from take of (species)) could be taken as a result of this proposed action. The incidental take is expected to be in the form of (harm, harass, kill, etc.). [Separately specify each type of take anticipated.]**

[Provide a concise summary of the analysis leading to this determination.]

OR

**The Service anticipates incidental take of (species) will be difficult to detect for the following reason(s):** [Incidental take of actual species numbers may be difficult to detect when the species is wide-ranging; has small body size; finding a dead or impaired specimen is unlikely; losses may be masked by seasonal fluctuations in numbers or other causes (e.g., oxygen depletions for aquatic species); or the species occurs in habitat (e.g., caves) that makes detection difficult]. **However, the following level of take of this species can be anticipated by loss of** [quantify amount of surrogate species, food, cover, other essential habitat element such as water quantity or quality, or symbiont] **because:** [provide an explanation].

When take of listed migratory birds (including the bald eagle) will result from the actions under consultation:

**The Fish and Wildlife Service will not refer the incidental take of any migratory bird or bald eagle for prosecution under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 703-712), or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 668-668d), if such take is in compliance with the terms and conditions (including amount and/or number) specified herein.**

Standard paragraph for incidental take of marine mammals: [If the incidental take is not authorized under MMPA 101(a)(5):]

**The Service is not including an incidental take authorization for marine mammals at this time because the incidental take of marine mammals has not been authorized under section 101(a)(5) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and/or its 1994 Amendments. Following issuance of such regulations or authorizations, the Service may amend this preliminary biological opinion to include an incidental take statement for marine mammals, as appropriate.**

After area-specific or activity-specific regulations have taken effect:

**Pursuant to section 101(a)(5) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, as amended in 1994, and implementing regulations at 50 CFR §18.27, and 50 CFR §216 and §229, the following measures are required to be consistent with the total taking allowable under the MMPA authorization and to effect the least practical adverse impact on the species and its habitat and on the availability of the species for subsistence uses: [Cite measures identified in specific regulations and/or letters of authorization or permits for commercial fishing]. Pursuant to section 7(b)(4) of the Endangered Species Act, the following reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate to**

**minimize take:** [Go on to list the measures, followed by the standard paragraph for terms and conditions.]

## EFFECT OF THE TAKE

The following statement should be made when the preliminary biological opinion finds likely **jeopardy/adverse modification**, and no reasonable and prudent alternative is available:

**Because the proposed action is (1) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of (species) or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat, and (2) no reasonable and prudent alternatives have been identified, any incidental take resulting from the proposed action would be prohibited.**

If the proposed action is not likely to result in **jeopardy/adverse modification**:

**In the accompanying preliminary biological opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the species or destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

If the opinion contains reasonable and prudent alternatives:

**In the accompanying preliminary biological opinion, the Service determined that this level of anticipated take is not likely to result in jeopardy to the species or destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat when (one of) the reasonable and prudent alternative(s) is implemented.**

## REASONABLE AND PRUDENT MEASURES (as appropriate)

Standardized introductory paragraph for reasonable and prudent measures for species other than marine mammals and migratory birds:

**The Service believes the following reasonable and prudent measure(s) are necessary and appropriate to minimize take of (species):** [Go on to list these measures and provide a brief discussion documenting the Service's analysis of the biological need for, and reasonableness of, these measures.]

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Standardized introductory paragraph for terms and conditions:

**In order to be exempt from the prohibitions of section 9 of the Act, the (agency) must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures described above and outline required reporting/monitoring requirements. These terms and conditions are non-discretionary.**

[Go on to list these terms and conditions, including the requirements for monitoring, reporting, review, and disposition of any specimens.]

Salvage of specimens and/or habitat data included as a term and condition (as appropriate)

Closing Paragraph:

**The Service believes that no more than (number or extent) of (species) will be incidentally taken as a result of the proposed action. The reasonable and prudent measures, with their implementing terms and conditions, are designed to minimize the impact of incidental take that might otherwise result from the proposed action. The Service believes that no more than (number or extent) of (species) will be incidentally taken. If, during the course of the action, this level of incidental take is exceeded, such incidental take represents new information requiring reinitiation of consultation and review of the reasonable and prudent measures provided. The Federal agency must immediately provide an explanation of the causes of the taking and review with the Service the need for possible modification of the reasonable and prudent measures.**

Closing statement, if take is anticipated:

**Because the proposed action is likely to result in the taking of listed species incidental to that action, the Service has included an incidental take statement pursuant to section 7(b)(4) of the Act. However, because this is an early consultation on the prospective action, this incidental take statement does not eliminate the (agency's) or the (applicant's) liability under the taking prohibitions of section 9 of the Act.**

**Instead, this statement provides your agency and the applicant with foreknowledge of the terms and conditions that will be required if this prospective application is filed with your agency. These reasonable and prudent measures and implementing terms and conditions become effective only after the Service confirms the preliminary biological opinion as a final biological opinion on the prospective action.**

CONFERENCE REPORT/CONFERENCE NOTICE (as appropriate)

CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 7(a)(1) of the Act directs Federal agencies to utilize their authorities to further the purposes of the Act by carrying out conservation programs for the benefit of endangered and threatened species. Conservation recommendations are discretionary agency activities to minimize or avoid adverse effects of a proposed action on listed species or critical habitat, to help implement recovery plans, or to develop information.**

Closing paragraph:

**In order for the Service to be kept informed of actions minimizing or avoiding adverse effects or benefitting listed species or their habitats, the Service requests notification of the implementation of any conservation recommendations.**

#### REINITIATION NOTICE

The following closing paragraph is used:

**This concludes early consultation for the (action). You may ask the Service to confirm this preliminary biological opinion as a final biological opinion on the prospective action once you receive the permit application from the prospective applicant. The request must be in writing. If the Service reviews the proposed action and finds that there are no significant changes in the action as planned or in the information used during the early consultation, it will confirm the preliminary biological opinion as a final biological opinion on the project and no further section 7 consultation will be necessary except when one of the following criteria for reinitiation is met: (1) the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded; (2) new information reveals effects of the agency action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not considered in this opinion; (3) the action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect on the listed species or critical habitat that was not considered in this opinion; or (4) a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the action. When the amount or extent of incidental take is exceeded, any operations causing such take must cease pending reinitiation.**

**If the Service does not confirm this preliminary biological opinion as a final biological opinion on the prospective action, the (agency) is required to initiate formal consultation with the Service.**

#### LITERATURE CITED

**Sample letter to prospective applicants about the availability of early consultation rights.**

(date)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

This responds to your letter of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, concerning the upcoming proposed experimental use of \_\_\_\_\_. This agricultural chemical was previously used in [State] under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Experimental Use Permit (EUP) \_\_\_\_-EUP-\_\_\_\_.

We have enclosed a general list of all endangered, threatened, and proposed species in [State], organized by county, for planning purposes. When specific test plots have been designated, EPA should consult with this office pursuant to section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), prior to the issuance of the EUP for \_\_\_\_\_.

The enclosed list constitutes technical assistance only. It does not fulfill EPA's requirements pursuant to section 7 of the ESA; only EPA or their non-Federal designee can fulfill those requirements. By copy of this letter, EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs is being made aware of their responsibility to consult with the FWS to insure that any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. We hope the resulting dialogue between EPA and the FWS will provide registrants and permittees with better guidance on compliance with the Endangered Species Act. If EPA chooses not to consult, the FWS cannot be certain that EPA and you, as the project proponent, have complied with the provisions of the ESA.

Nevertheless, you should be aware that, pursuant to section 7(a)(3) of the ESA, you have certain opportunities as an applicant for a Federal permit or license. Section 7(a)(3) and implementing regulations at 50 C.F.R. §402.11 establish an optional process called "early consultation," which was specifically designed to reduce the likelihood of conflicts between listed species or critical habitat and prospective actions such as yours.

Copies of the specific regulations pertaining to early consultations are enclosed. If you have reason to believe that your proposal, which will eventually be included in an application for Federal agency approval, may affect listed species or critical habitat, you can ask the Federal agency issuing a permit or license (in this case it is EPA) to enter into early consultation with the FWS.

Although early consultation would be between EPA and the FWS, your office must be involved in the process if you elect to request EPA to initiate early consultation with the FWS. Your

request for EPA to initiate early consultation with the FWS must be in writing and must certify that: (1) you have a definitive proposal outlining your action and its effects, and (2) that you intend to carry out your proposal if it is authorized. When EPA receives your proposal, they are required by the ESA to initiate early consultation with the FWS.

If you have questions regarding our comments, please contact [Biologist] at [office and telephone number]

Sincerely yours,

Field Supervisor

## **Outline of an emergency consultation package, including standardized statements**

Address

Salutation

Introductory Paragraph:

**This document transmits the (Fish and Wildlife Service's/National Marine Fisheries Service's) biological opinion based on the Service's review of the (name or designation for the action) located in (County, State, and Marine Area as appropriate), and the emergency consultation on the effects of that action on (species) in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Your (date) request for formal consultation was received on (date).**

**This biological opinion is based on information provided in the (date) biological assessment (or other title), the (date) draft environmental assessment (or environmental impact statement), the (date) project proposal, telephone conversations of (dates) with (names), field investigations, and other sources of information. A complete administrative record of this consultation is on file in (this office/elsewhere).**

Consultation History

### **BIOLOGICAL OPINION**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

Conservation Measures

**STATUS OF THE SPECIES (rangewide and/or recovery unit)**

**ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE (in the action area)**

**EFFECTS OF THE ACTION**

[Document previous Service recommendations]

**CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

Introduction:

**Cumulative effects include the effects of future State, tribal, local or private actions that are reasonably certain to occur in the action area considered in this biological opinion. Future Federal actions that are unrelated to the proposed action are not considered in this section because they require separate consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act.**

CONCLUSION

**After reviewing the current status of (species), the environmental baseline for the action area [use if different from the range of the species], the effects of the (action) and the cumulative effects, it is the Service's biological opinion that the (action), as implemented, (is/is not) likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the (species), and (is/is not) likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. [If no critical habitat has been designated for the species or the action will not affect designated critical habitat, use one of the following statements.] No critical habitat has been designated for this species, therefore, none will be affected. -OR- Critical habitat for this species has been designated at (location), however, this action does not affect that area and no destruction or adverse modification of that critical habitat is anticipated.**

REASONABLE AND PRUDENT ALTERNATIVES (as appropriate)

[Include only if further action can restore/enhance species/critical habitat to a level below the jeopardy/adverse modification threshold.]

Introductory Paragraph:

**Regulations (50 CFR §402.02) implementing section 7 of the Act define reasonable and prudent alternatives as alternative actions, identified during formal consultation, that: (1) can be implemented in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of the action; (2) can be implemented consistent with the scope of the action agency's legal authority and jurisdiction; (3) are economically and technologically feasible; and (4) would, the Service believes, avoid the likelihood of jeopardizing the continued existence of listed species or resulting in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.**

INCIDENTAL TAKE STATEMENT

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 9 of the Act and Federal regulation pursuant to section 4(d) of the Act prohibit the take of endangered and threatened species, respectively, without special exemption. Take is defined as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Harm is further defined by FWS to include significant habitat modification or degradation that results in death or injury to listed species by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Harass is defined by FWS as intentional or negligent actions that create the likelihood of injury to listed species to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavior patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering. Incidental take is defined as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. Under the terms of section 7(b)(4) and section 7(o)(2), taking that is incidental to and not intended as part of the agency action is not considered to be prohibited taking under the Act provided that such taking is in compliance with the terms and conditions of this Incidental Take Statement.**

CONFERENCE REPORT/CONFERENCE NOTICE (as appropriate)

#### CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Include recommendations that may help protect listed species and their habitats in future emergency situations or initiate beneficial actions that can be taken to conserve the species.

Introductory paragraph:

**Section 7(a)(1) of the Act directs Federal agencies to utilize their authorities to further the purposes of the Act by carrying out conservation programs for the benefit of endangered and threatened species. Conservation recommendations are discretionary agency activities to minimize or avoid adverse effects of a proposed action on listed species or critical habitat, to help implement recovery plans, or to develop information.**

Closing paragraph:

**In order for the Service to be kept informed of actions minimizing or avoiding adverse effects or benefitting listed species or their habitats, the Service requests notification of the implementation of any conservation recommendations.**

## REINITIATION NOTICE

None, if discretionary Federal agency involvement has terminated.

## LITERATURE CITED

**FWS Emergency consultation notification memorandum to the Regional Office (optional).**

(date)

Memorandum

To: Assistant Regional Director, \_\_\_\_\_

From: Field Supervisor, [name of Field Office]

Subject: Emergency Consultation on [name of Federal action].

This office has completed an informal emergency consultation. The following information summarizes the location of the emergency, nature of the emergency, listed species and critical habitat(s) involved, and how those species and habitats are likely to be affected by the emergency.

Date of Contact: Time:

Contact(s) Name:

Agency:

Contact(s) Title:

Nature of the Emergency:

Species/Critical Habitats in the Area:

Anticipated Effects:

Recommendations Given the Contact:

## INTRA-SERVICE SECTION 7 BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION FORM

[Note: This form provides the outline of information needed for intra-Service consultation. If additional space is needed, attach additional sheets, or set up this form to accommodate your responses.]

Originating Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Region:

II. Service Activity (Program)

III. Pertinent Species and Habitat:

A. Listed species and/or their critical habitat within the action area:

B. Proposed species and/or proposed critical habitat within the action area

C. Candidate species within the action area:

D. Include species/habitat occurrence on a map.

IV. Geographic area or station name and action:

V. Location (attach map):

A. Ecoregion Number and Name:

B. County and State:

C. Section, township, and range (or latitude and longitude):

D. Distance (miles) and direction to nearest town:

E. Species/habitat occurrence:

VI. Description of proposed action (attach additional pages as needed):

VII. Determination of effects:

A. Explanation of effects of the action on species and critical habitats in items III. A, B, and C (attach additional pages as needed):

B. Explanation of actions to be implemented to reduce adverse effects:

VIII. Effect determination and response requested: [\* = optional]

A. Listed species/designated critical habitat:

Determination

Response requested

no effect/no adverse modification

(species: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\*Concurrence

may affect, but is not likely to adversely

affect species/adversely modify critical habitat

(species: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_Concurrence

may affect, and is likely to adversely

affect species/adversely modify critical habitat

(species: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_Formal  
Consultation

B. Proposed species/proposed critical habitat:

Determination

Response requested

no effect on proposed species/no adverse

modification of proposed critical habitat

(species: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\*Concurrence

is likely to jeopardize proposed species/

adversely modify proposed critical habitat

(species: \_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_Conference

C. Candidate species:

Determination

Response requested

no effect

(species: \_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_\*Concurrence

is likely to jeopardize candidate species

(species: \_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_Conference

\_\_\_\_\_  
signature

[Title/office of supervisor at originating station]

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

IX. Reviewing ESO Evaluation:

A. Concurrence \_\_\_\_\_ Nonconcurrence \_\_\_\_\_

B. Formal consultation required \_\_\_\_\_

C. Conference required \_\_\_\_\_

D. Informal conference required \_\_\_\_\_

E. Remarks (attach additional pages as needed):

\_\_\_\_\_  
signature

[Title/office of reviewing official]

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

## INSTRUCTIONS

**Originating Person:** The person(s) or unit (field office, refuge, program) proposing an action for which the Intra-Service Section 7 Biological Evaluation Form is being prepared.

**Date:** Date the information on the form was finalized.

**I. Region:** The Region in which the proposed action will occur.

**II. Service activity:** The Service program initiating the proposed action.

**III. Pertinent species and habitat.**

**A. Listed species and/or their critical habitat within the action area:** The action area includes the immediate area where the proposed action will occur, as well as any other areas where direct or indirect impacts of the action may be expected. For example, effects of an action in the headwaters of a stream may affect endangered fish that occur 20 miles downstream. A compilation of listed species or critical habitats that possibly occur in the action area may be generated by the Project Leader, or it may be requested from the appropriate ESO.

Note: All experimental populations of listed species are treated as threatened species. However, for the purposes of intra-Service section 7 consultation, they are treated as species *proposed* for listing if they occur off National Wildlife Refuge or National Park System lands and they are classed as "non-essential" experimental populations.

List all threatened and endangered species and critical habitat that may be affected by the proposed action. An effect exists even if only one individual or habitat segment may be affected. Consider both beneficial and adverse effects, regardless of their magnitude.

It is necessary to list all threatened and endangered species and critical habitats in the action area that will not be affected at any level of significance. This informs the reviewer that such species have been considered.

**B. Proposed species and/or proposed critical habitat within the action area:** Lists of proposed species and critical habitat that could occur in the action area may be generated by the project leader or may be requested from the appropriate ESO.

List all species and habitats in the action area for which a proposed listing rule (but not a final rule) or proposed critical habitat designation has been published in the Federal Register. The list

should include not only proposed species that may be affected, but also those that will not be affected. Use the same consideration as in Item III (A) above.

**C. Candidate species within the action area:** Service actions shall include consideration of candidate species as though proposed for listing. Lists of candidate species that could occur in the action area may be generated by the project leader or may be requested from the appropriate ESO.

List all candidate species that may be affected by the proposed action. Because listing candidates may be added to, or dropped from, candidate species lists between the typically biannual printings of the Notice of Review, it is necessary to check candidate lists with the appropriate ESO.

Include in the list of candidate species in the action area those that will not be affected by the proposed action.

**IV. Geographic area or station name and action:**

Briefly describe the proposed action and where it will occur. (For example: The proposed action is to directly stock, or transfer to the State of X for stocking, channel catfish and smallmouth bass. These stockings would occur in both Blue Water and Minnow River drainages). A more detailed description of the proposed action will be presented under Section VI.

**V. Location (attach map):**

In addition to the following four specific descriptions, it is vital to attach a map(s). The reviewer may not be familiar with the project area and will need the maps to precisely relate the proposed project to the affected species. Maps should depict, preferably in large scale, the exact locations of project elements. The maps should include section, township, and range, or latitude and longitude. Topographic maps are preferred, with the action area depicted on them.

**A. Ecoregion Number and Name:** Self-explanatory

**B. County and State:** Self-explanatory.

**C. Section, township, and range (or latitude and longitude):**

Locate the project area as precisely as possible. If the action is stocking a small stock tank, the descriptor should include at least quarter section and preferably quarter/quarter section. For scattered project sites, such as in fish stocking, a location should be given for each site.

**D. Distance (miles) and direction to nearest town:** Self-explanatory.

**E. Species/habitat occurrence:** Depict on the location map the species and habitat occurrences.

**VI. Description of proposed action:**

What is the purpose of this proposed action and how do you plan to accomplish it? Describe the project area as well as the project. These descriptions should be detailed enough so that the reviewer can fully understand what the components of the action include and how the project will affect the species. Do not assume that the reviewing office will understand procedures that are taken for granted within your program. Details can be provided here, or by attaching copies of project plans, management plans, stocking schedules, or other project documents. National Environmental Protection Act documents are usually helpful attachments. Sketches or blueprints of the proposed action should be attached. Proposed project dates should be provided. Attach a biological assessment if the project is considered a "major construction activity." Include any measures agreed to through informal consultation to reduce any adverse impacts.

**VII. Determination of effects**

**A. Explanation of effects of the action:**

Discuss either the effects of the action on each listed, proposed, or candidate species and critical habitat in the action area, or why those species or critical habitats will not be affected. For species or critical habitats affected by the proposed action, provide the following information: [Note: candidate species will have no proposed critical habitat.]

1. Status of species in action area; is it native (natural and/or stocked) or non-native in the action area? Include population and/or distribution trends (provide survey information).
2. Species habitat in the action area and its significance to spawning, feeding, migratory habits (or behavior), cover, roost, etc. Is the area currently occupied or unoccupied historic range for the species?
3. Impacts of the proposed action on species and/or critical habitat, including direct, indirect, interdependent, interrelated, and cumulative impacts.
4. Quantification of effects - acres of habitat, miles of habitat, number of individuals, etc.

5. Summary of effects - include the basis for your conclusion - best judgment, literature, citations, studies, etc.
- B. Describe, if known, project modifications that would promote the conservation of the affected species.** Project modification ideas may be found in recovery plans. Although section 7 of Act prohibits only those actions by Federal agencies which are likely to jeopardize listed species or adversely modify critical habitat, the Service has a commitment to recovering listed species and trying to prevent the need to list additional species.

#### **VIII. Effect determination and response requested:**

Enter the species in the appropriate determination. For each determination, place an X on the response requested.

##### **A. Listed species/critical habitat:**

**No effect/no adverse modification.** This conclusion is reached if the proposed action and its interrelated and interdependent actions will not directly or indirectly affect listed species or destroy/adversely modify designated critical habitat. Formal section 7 consultation is not required when the no effect conclusion is reached. However, a request for the optional written concurrence is encouraged to facilitate a complete administrative record.

**May Affect, but is not likely to adversely affect species/adversely modify critical habitat.** This conclusion is appropriate when effects to the species or critical habitat are expected to be beneficial, discountable, or insignificant. Beneficial effects are contemporaneous positive effects without any adverse effects to the species or habitat. Insignificant effects relate to the size of the impact (and should never reach the scale where take occurs), while discountable effects are those that are extremely unlikely to occur. Based on best judgment, a person would not: (1) be able to meaningfully measure, detect, or evaluate insignificant effects; or (2) expect discountable effects to occur. If the ESO concurs in writing with the Project Leader's determination of "is not likely to adversely affect" listed species or critical habitat, the intra-Service section 7 consultation process is completed.

If formal section 7 consultation is required for other species affected by this proposed action, then it may be easier and less confusing to fold the "is not likely to adversely effect" concurrence into the formal section 7 consultation rather than doing a separate concurrence.

**May affect, and is likely to adversely affect species/adversely modify critical habitat.**

This conclusion is reached if any adverse effect to listed species or critical habitat may occur as a direct or indirect result of the proposed Service action or its interrelated or interdependent actions, and the effect is not discountable or insignificant (see definition of "is not likely to adversely affect". In the event the overall effect of the proposed action is beneficial to the listed species or critical habitat, but may also cause some adverse effect on individuals of the listed species or segments of the critical habitat, then the determination should be "is likely to adversely affect." Such a determination requires formal section 7 consultation.

Example: A refuge proposes prescribed burning for a prairie remnant to improve the habitat for the endangered Karner blue butterfly. The burn will substantially improve the habitat for the species and promote its recovery in subsequent years. However, individual Karner blue butterfly eggs and larvae will be killed during the burn. Even though the net effect of the burn will be highly beneficial to the listed species, the burn must be considered to have an adverse effect. A finding of "is likely to adversely affect" is necessary.

**B. Proposed species/proposed critical habitat:**

**No effect on proposed species/no adverse modification of proposed critical habitat.**

This conclusion is reached if the proposed action and its interrelated and interdependent actions will not directly or indirectly affect proposed species or destroy or adversely modify proposed critical habitat. A request for the optional written concurrence is encouraged.

**Is likely to jeopardize proposed species/adversely modify proposed critical habitat.**

For proposed species and proposed critical habitats, the Service is required to evaluate whether the proposed Service action is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the proposed species or adversely modify an area proposed for designation as critical habitat. If this conclusion is reached, a section 7 conference is required. If this conclusion is reached, intra-Service conference is required.

**C. Candidate species:**

**No effect on candidate species.** This conclusion is reached if the proposed action and its interrelated and interdependent actions will not directly or indirectly affect candidate species. A request for the optional written concurrence is encouraged.

**Is likely to jeopardize candidate species.** For candidate species, the Service is required to evaluate whether the proposed Service action is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the candidate species. If this conclusion is reached, intra-Service section 7 conference is required.